

**NINETY
QUESTIONS
CONCERNING
THE GREAT TAO**



PREFACE

Tao is true. If we do not know what truth is, how can we learn the Tao? Therefore, we must know the truth. The only way of knowing the truth is to question. Whenever we do not understand, we must ask questions.

Unfortunately, we are ashamed of asking questions. So, the doubt in our minds remains unsolved.

Many people know the Tao since it has been openly propagated all over the world nowadays. But, very few people are able to understand the importance of the Tao and discipline themselves by keeping the spirit of the Tao. The reason is that when they have doubts, they do not raise questions.

So, this book may be of assistance to those people who are determined to cultivate the Tao. Moreover, it may lead them to a further study of the Great Tao.

1. What is Tao?

Tao exists prior to the presence of Spirit and Earth. Lao Tze, the creator of Taoism, said, "Something complete and shapeless is of existence prior to the creation of Spirit and Earth. Serene! Tranquil! Boundless! Abiding alone and unchangeable! Extending over everywhere without risk. It may be styled the "Mother of Universe". Although the Tao is invisible, yet it creates and dominates all visible and audible objects. Moreover, the Tao bears no name as Lao Tze said, "I do not know its name, but designate it—the Tao. Arbitrarily forcing a name on it, I call it the Great." Since the Tao is invisible, it is symbolized by an unbroken circle "O"— a forcibly limited symbol in view of the limitation of the human mind. The unbroken circle "O" represents the Tao in quietness whereas a straight line "—" represents the Tao in motion. When the Tao is in activity, the unbroken circle becomes a straight line. There will be an evolutionary process of differentiation from unity to multiplicity. (The Chinese character "One" (—) is a straight line.) The Tao creates Spirit, Earth and Man. It gives lives to all creatures and plants. Besides, it dominates the rotation of the earth and the rest of the planets. Indeed, the Tao is the cause of all things. But, if the straight line is shortened, it will become a dot. So the unbroken circle, the straight line and the dot represent the Tao in quietness and in motion respectively. Furthermore, if the straight line elongates, it will become the longest line. Indeed, the Tao is the greatest of all, for it is shapeless. The Tao creates and dominates everything. But, if the straight line is shortened, it will become a dot. In other words, the Tao can also be the smallest of all, for the Tao is formless.

As far as man is concerned, the Tao is referred to his Eternal Spirit. Man is endowed with his Eternal Spirit, but he is not aware of it. If he realizes the presence of his Eternal Spirit and preserves it well, he will become a sage. On the contrary, if he does

not know how to preserve his Spirit well, he will go to hell after death. Therefore, to realize the presence of his valuable Spirit is much better than to read thousands of books.

It is obvious that man owns the five cardinal principles of his moral and intellectual nature, namely, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sincerity. So, he will become a sage if he regulates his affairs by the five constituents of man. To preserve his Eternal Spirit, man must first render his filial respect to his parents and love others. Moreover, he should sacrifice himself in order to benefit other people and should always be polite and humble. Finally, he should be considerate to others and should abide by his words.

Apart from this, if we write the Chinese character “One”, which is a straight line, vertically, it will become a vertical line. If both the straight line and the vertical line combine together, a cross + will be formed. Indeed, the Tao is the creator of all things. It is not surprising therefore that Lao Tze said, “Though the Tao is invisible, it creates Spirit and Earth and dominates the rotation of the earth and the moon. And, though the Tao bears no name, yet it gives lives to everything.” In conclusion, before the presence of Spirit and Earth, there is the presence of the Tao. But, the Tao is invisible and inaudible. The Tao creates the universe and the earth and helps everything to grow and prosper. No doubt, all visible and audible objects cannot exist without it.

2. What is the relationship between the Tao and mankind?

The Tao is true. It is the right path of life. If we slip off from the proper path, we must be aware of returning to it at once. The Chinese term for path is “Tao”. Indeed, we should endeavour to tread the path towards self-perfection.

Confucius said, "The righteous man persists to the proper path of life even though he suffers from starvation." Thus, we realize the importance of the Tao. In order to avoid committing errors, we have to be extremely careful, cautious and apprehensive all the time. As we have learned the Tao, we must never do evil affairs or forget the principles of the Tao. It should be noted that the sages in the past never forget the Tao after learning it. They were very cautious and always guarded themselves against depravity.

Furthermore, if we keep ourselves away from the Tao, we shall receive punishment in society and suffer in hell after death. Therefore, the Tao bears a close relationship with man.

3. How many periods could the propagation of the Tao be divided?

The propagation of the Tao could be divided into three periods:—

(a) The "Qing Yang Period" (Green Stage)

In the "Tao Teh Ching" we find the expression 'Although the Tao is boundless, yet it creates Spirit and Earth.' This proves that before there were the universe and the earth, there was the existence of the Tao. Fu Hsi, the most ancient personage in Chinese history, devoted himself to meditation on the fundamental meaning of the universe. He devised the Eight Trigrams in order to show the mystery of Spirit and Earth. From that time onwards, man began to learn the Tao. After that, Tsang Chieh, minister of Huang Ti, invented six scripts. Houses were built and clothes were made. Man became civilized and was no longer a barbarian. In fact, Emperor Yao, Emperor Shun, King Wen and the Duke of Chou taught the Tao to one another. This period is called the "Qing Yang Period." During this period only the emperors could learn the Tao.

(B) The “Hong Yang Period” (Red Stage)

During the Chou Dynasty, people started to disobey the emperors who could hardly carry out the teachings of the Tao. Therefore, from that time onwards, three religions, namely, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism spread the Tao.

Lao Tze was the first person to propagate the Great Tao. He had his great book named “Tao Teh Ching” which explained explicitly the basic principles of the Tao. It is indeed a very good book. Lao Tze was admired as if a dragon by Confucius. Confucius who learned from Lao Tze at a time also bore the responsibility of spreading the Great Tao. He spread the Tao by travelling many places in China. He propagated the Tao and his speech became the basic principles which should be followed by everyone of us. Moreover, the books such as “The Great Learning” and the “Doctrine Of The Mean” explained the mystery of the Great Tao.

Mencius continued to spread the teachings of Confucius. After that, the Tao was spread from China to India. Although in Sung Dynasty there were many scholars such as Chou Tun-i, Cheng I, Cheng Ho and Chu Hsi, yet these scholars could only explain the literal meaning of the Tao. Unfortunately, they failed to learn the basic ideas of the Great Tao. The fact is that after the time of Mencius, the Great Tao was spread to the West. Buddha therefore started to propagate the Tao in India. During this period, all these three religions spread their own principles. They all had their own books and their ways of teachings. When Tat Moore who learned the basic doctrines of Buddhism, went to China after Tsun Dynasty, the teachings of the Tao were once again propagated in China. Tat Moore was the first person to spread the Tao in China. He taught the Tao to San Kwong, who became the second. The third was Tsang Chang, the fourth Tao Shun and the fifth Wan Yan. Wei-lan was the sixth and Mr. Pak and Mr. Ma were the

seventh. Mr. Lo was the eighth whereas Mr. Wong was the ninth. Mr. Ng was the tenth while Mr. Ho was the eleventh. The twelfth was Mr. Yuen whereas Mr. Tsui and Mr. Yeung were the thirteenth. Mr. Yao was the fourteenth and Mr. Wong was the fifteenth. Mr. Lau Ching Hui was the sixteenth. They all taught one another the Tao. This marked the end of the "Hong Yang Period".

(C) The "Bai Yang Period" (White Stage).

The period during which we are living now is called the "Bai Yang Period". It is now the right time for the sage named Jing Gong to spread the Great Tao to rescue all mankind. At this moment, all religions are to be united into one—the Great Tao. Not only do men have the chance to learn the Tao, but all good spirits and ghosts also have the golden opportunity to learn and practise the Tao. As a matter of fact, everyone will become a sage if he/she has great confidence in the Tao and carries out the principles of the Tao whole-heartedly. This period is called the "Bai Yang Period".

4. What are the main purposes of the Tao?

The purposes of the Tao are to respect God and the sages, to carry out the filial duties, to love our brothers and sisters, to get rid of our bad habits and to discriminate between the right and the wrong. The Tao also teaches us to be kind to our neighbours and to be faithful to our friends. Indeed, the main purpose of the Tao is to bring harmony and brotherhood to all sorts of people throughout the whole world. Furthermore, the establishment of truthfulness towards the Tao is essential. Mencius said, "Never has there been one who is in possession of complete truthfulness and yet fails to affect others." Therefore, the attainment of truthfulness is regarded as the most excellent thing. As a matter of fact, the main objective of the Tao is to rescue all the good people from disasters and misfortune. As we have learned the Tao, we should propagate the Tao in order to benefit mankind.

5. Is there any cycle of birth and death?

Yes, there is. As far as seasons are concerned, there are four seasons in the year, viz, spring, summer, autumn and winter. After winter, there will be spring again. Moreover, we work during daytime and rest when night falls. In the next morning, we shall get up early and start our work again. This is called a cycle.

Furthermore, a very prosperous country may turn to be a very poor one whereas a very poor person may become a rich man. It is evident that we are unable to prevent ourselves from death. After death, we shall become human beings or other animals for the next life. This is the cycle of birth and death. Therefore, if we do not learn the Great Tao, we shall not be able to escape from the birth and death cycle.

6. Can we avoid the Birth-Death cycle?

Yes, we can. It is plain that people who do evil affairs during their lives will become dogs, cats or demons or suffer in hell after death. But, the kind people who accumulate goodness will become human beings again or become gods after death. Unfortunately, they cannot go to Heaven because they do not learn the Great Tao. After learning the Tao, we must improve ourselves in order to go to Heaven after death. As a matter of fact, it is not easy to hear about the Tao. We are able to learn the Tao at this moment simply because the world is now flooded with violence and disasters.

Emperor Sun Zi, who became a monk when he was old said, "Before I was born, I didn't know who I was. After being born, I don't know who I am. Being an adult, I know who I am. When I die, I don't know who I shall be. Nobody knows where I come from and where I shall go. Why should I live in this world without doing something useful? I prefer to be unborn. Then I will have no worries or sorrows at all.

Therefore, we shall never go to hell if we learn the Tao. Indeed, the Tao enables us to lead a better and meaningful life.

7. Is it easy to learn the Tao ?

No, it is not. As a matter of fact, there are many difficulties.

First, it is not easy for us to be human beings. We just imagine that wild animals do not have the opportunity to learn the Tao. Furthermore, our Eternal Spirits exist within our bodies, without our bodies, we cannot preserve our valuable Spirits. In other words, by making use of our bodies, we can preach the Tao, understand the excellence of the Tao and teach others to behave well. We must therefore take good care of ourselves.

Secondly, it is not easy to learn the Great Tao. The Tao is widely propagated nowadays to rescue mankind owing to the fact that the world is now flooded with disasters and violence. Evidently, if the world were not full of natural disasters nowadays, the Tao would not be widely spread. It is therefore a rare opportunity for us to learn the Tao.

Thirdly, it is difficult for us to learn the Tao because there are many kinds of religions nowadays, but there is only one genuine Tao. Without learning the Tao, we shall not be able to save ourselves from disasters.

In conclusion, it is not easy for us to learn the Great Tao.

8. What does it mean by "If people get ONE, they will become sages"?

The Tao is originally quiet. It can be represented by an unbroken circle "O". When the Tao is in motion, it becomes a straight line — . (The Chinese character "ONE" is a straight

line.) The Tao created Spirit, Earth and Man. Indeed, it created everything in this world. If there is the Tao, the earth and planets will rotate in proper order and everything in the world will be in harmony. Furthermore, if man learns the Tao, he will be able to preserve his Spirit and will become a sage.

Before we were born, our Eternal Spirits are originally pure. After we were born, "ONE" (i.e. our Eternal Spirits) splits into "TWO" (i.e. our Eternal Spirits and our bodies).

Our Eternal Spirits lose "ONE". The fact is that our Spirits correspond to the Chien trigram ☰ before we were born. But, after we were born, the central line of the Chien trigram ☰ splits into two. Thus, it transforms into Li trigram ☷. The Li trigram ☷ symbolizes departure. In other words, our Spirits depart from the place where they should be and scatter to the noses, ears, mouths and eyes. Consequently, we become greedy and ambitious.

On the other hand, our bodies also lose "ONE". Our bodies originally correspond to the Kun trigram ☷. But, after we were born, the Kun trigram ☷ transforms into the Kan trigram ☷. The Kan trigram symbolizes suffering. As we indulge in sex, wine and gambling, our Spirits are obscured by greed and wrong desires. Eventually, we shall suffer in hell after death.

Therefore, as we have learnt the Tao, We must first of all purify our Eternal Spirits. ("ONE" is referred to our Spirits). On the one hand, we must get rid of our wrong desires, passions and depravity. On the other hand, we should carry out the five constituents of man, namely, Benevolence, Righteousness, Propriety, Wisdom and Sincerity. If we regulate our affairs by these five cardinal principles all day long, we shall become sages.

It is plain that "ONE" is important. In the absence of the Tao (which is represented by "ONE"), the earth and other planets

will not revolve round the sun properly. Similarly, without the Tao there will be earthquakes, cyclone, typhoons and disasters all over the world. Finally, if man loses his conscience his Spirit he will go to hell after death.

9. Why is there criticism against the Great Tao?

The reason why some people criticize the Tao is that they do not understand how valuable the Great Tao is. In fact, the Tao is true. If the Tao were not criticized by the ignorant people, the Tao would not be widely propagated to all of us.

Moreover, blasphemy and criticism are good for us because we are able to repent our sins. Confucius, for example, was rebuked by many ignorant people when he was going everywhere to spread the Great Tao in past days. He said, "A man feels no regret even though he may be unknown. It is only a sage who is able to live in this way." Despite all these criticism during his lifetime, Confucius is now worshipped by everyone of us. Undoubtedly, criticism against the Tao does no harm to the Great Tao at all. On the contrary, it helps to propagate the Tao.

10. Why are there still pain and sufferings since we have already learnt the Tao?

It is true that we still experience pain and sufferings even though we have learnt the Great Tao. The reason is that without pain and sufferings we could not strengthen our character or express our great confidence in the Tao.

It is interesting to note that although Confucius at a time suffered from hunger, yet he was contented and happy. He still persisted to the principles of the Great Tao even though he was on the verge of starvation. Indeed, Confucius erected a very good

example for us. Mencius said, "If one takes up a great responsibility, one will first have to undergo all kinds of sufferings" Therefore, pain and sufferings are good for us as our capacity for responsible humanitarian work will be developed and strengthened in this way. Our patience can also be tested only when there are pain and sufferings.

11. Explanation of the Great Tao

The Tao is the great creative principle to which all things owe their origin. It pervades the whole universe. Furthermore, it brings about a harmonious order of things within the cosmos. It causes all things to grow and develop to the fullest extent of their utility. Without the Tao, the planets will stop their rotation and everything will cease to grow. We call the Tao the "Mother of Universe" We also call it God who is the noblest of all.

Furthermore, the Tao endows each one of us with the Eternal Spirit, which is the true self of man. Though the Tao is invisible and inaudible, yet it really exists. For example, we see the earth, the sun and the moon. But, there must be a creator! It is the Tao that created all this. We also know that the earth and other planets rotate whereas man and other creatures live. But, who dominated all this? No doubt, it is the Tao that dominates everything. We also know that scientists can invent and discover things. But, who teaches them the technique? It is the Tao that endows the scientists with the technique. Furthermore, clouds become rain when they are confronted with cold air and electricity can produce thunder. Indeed, it is the Tao that makes all this possible. Moreover, there are sound, light and electricity. But, why are there sound and light? It is the Tao that created all this.

We also know that a rainbow is a phenomenon. But, who makes this possible? Indeed, the Tao makes it possible. No doubt,

we cannot deny the presence of the Tao. Let us take two more examples. We do believe that there is electricity even though it is invisible. Moreover, we are convinced that we have ancestors even though we have never seen them before. So, we ought to believe in the Tao though we cannot see or hear it. Unfortunately, some people only believe what they see and begin to doubt the invisible things. Though they all have their own Spirits, yet they do not believe in them. As a result, they indulge themselves in sex, wine and gambling all day long and lead luxurious lives. It is a pity that they do not even think of purifying their minds. It is not surprising therefore that they will go to hell after death.

12. The cultivation of Tao can be manifested in 3 methods what are they?

The first method is the Great Tao. If we learn the Great Tao and carry out the principles of the Tao whole heartedly, we shall become sages. After learning the Tao, we are able to understand that we all have our Eternal Spirits and know how to preserve them well. Confucius said, "If I have the chance to learn the Great Tao in the morning, I shall be very happy even though I die in the evening." The Great Tao is therefore the most superior method with immediate result.

The second method is not so superior as the Great Tao. The followers of this method only practise meditation as a form of personal training for calming the mind and physical endurance which are able to pave the way for future higher spiritual evolution. This results in a slower effect.

The third method is the least superior consisting mainly of charitable deeds and setting free of birds and fishes. But, we must bear in mind that setting fish free is of little effect. It is done on humanitarian ground. At any rate, these people will reborn as

rich men after leading comfortable and luxurious lives after death as they have done good deeds. However, they are unable to escape from the birth-death cycle because they only reap what they sow. The deeds are however insufficient to be awarded a heavenly place.

13. How to progress after learning the Tao?

After learning the Tao, we must, on the one hand, have good conduct and repent our sins. On the other hand, we should benefit the world by propagating the Tao. If we do so, we shall progress in the Tao. Furthermore, there are other ways of making progress. The method is to spread the Tao in order that all the good people will have the opportunity to learn the Tao. We must also publish good books concerning the Tao so that they will be circulated throughout the world. Furthermore, we must study books such as the "Four Books" and the "Tao Teh Ching". Moreover, we must put the doctrines of Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism into practice. We should also try our best to help the poor and the handicapped in order to relieve their sufferings. Furthermore, we must advise the adults to love their sons and daughters and advise the children to fulfil their filial duties. We should advise the husband and the wife to be harmonious to each other. We ought to spread the virtues of truthfulness, sincerity and honesty as well.

Last but not least, we should advise others to get rid of their bad habits. What we have to bear in mind is that we should not boast of what we have done, nor should we lose our temper even if other people do not take our advice. Indeed, these are the methods of making progress in the Tao.

14. Why is the Tao called the "Great Tao"?

The Tao is called the Great Tao because the Tao not only saves mankind from disasters, but it also saves the gods and the ghosts as well. Eventually, man, good Spirits and ghosts will be

able to go to Heaven if they learn the Tao. Indeed, the Tao saves all Eternal Spirits.

15. How do the good Spirits learn the Tao?

People who do a lot of good work to benefit mankind will become gods after death. But, they cannot go to Heaven as they do not learn the Great Tao. Evidently, it is rather difficult for the gods to learn the Tao. They must first of all look for appropriate people who will bring them to learn the Tao in order to go to Heaven.

16. In what way can we make our deceased parents learn the Great Tao so that they can go to Heaven?

When our parents are alive, we should fulfil our filial duties. But, if they are dead, we should try our best to help them to go to Heaven in order to enjoy eternal happiness. If we practise the Tao persistently, propagate the Great Tao and abstain from meat and wine forever, we shall be able to help our deceased parents go to Heaven.

17. What is mean by the “Golden Cock crows three times”?

“The Golden Cock” represents the west. The west however corresponds to white colour. During this “Bai Yang Period” (the Chinese character “Bai” means white), man is saved by Maitreya Buddha. The phrase “Three Times” indicates that this is now the third time for the Great Tao to be propagated to all mankind. (The Qing Yang Period was the first period whereas the Hong Yang Period was the second. The Bai Yang Period is the third). No doubt, the whole expression of “The Golden Cock crows three times” means that while the world is flooded with natural disasters and violence nowadays, the Great Tao is propagated far and wide to save everyone.

18. What is doomsday?

From the time when Sky and Earth were created up to the time when they are to be destroyed, there are altogether twelve Periods. The length of time for each period is ten thousand and eight hundred years. It is interesting to note that Sky and Earth were created in the first and the second periods respectively. Man however was created in the third period. From the first to the sixth period everything in the universe develops gradually. But, after the seventh period all things are subject to gradual destruction. Finally, man will be destroyed in the ninth period whereas Sky and Earth will be under complete destruction in the tenth and the eleventh periods respectively. The twelfth period is the doomsday.

Man is now living in the "Eighth Period". In other words, he has been living in this world for about sixty thousand years. Furthermore, the propagation of the Tao can be divided into three periods, namely, the Qing Yang Period, the Hong Yang Period and the Bai Yang Period. The Qing Yang Period is referred to the time of Fu Hsi. The most ancient personage in Chinese history. The Hong Yang Period started from the Chou Dynasty. Finally, the Bai Yang Period began from the Eighth Period. During this Bai Yang Period the Tao is widely propagated to save all good people. But, the bad people will suffer from natural disasters. It is evident that many people indulge in sex and wine and lead luxurious lives nowadays. They do not realize that they have their valuable Spirits, nor do they know where their Spirits come from and where they will go after death. They simply do whatever they like and act contrary to the Tao. Consequently, there are much violence and disasters all the world over. This is called "doomsday". To prevent the coming of "doomsday", we must practise the Tao with devotion and single-mindedness. We must realize that Heaven is our permanent home.

19. Why is it that some people fall into illness all the time while others rarely get sick?

Many people fall into illness because they do not take good care of themselves. But, some people often suffer from illness, for they did evil affairs in the past. Very often we shall get sick if we eat too much. But, we shall be ill too if we are too greedy and always indulge in sex and wine. Obviously, if we are contented, we shall be happy all the time. Therefore, we should be contented even though we are poor. Furthermore, if we abstain from wine and meat, we shall not get sick easily. It is interesting to note that in China immediately after the Hang Dynasty many people suffered from starvation. But, one man was very healthy because he abstained from meat and wine for thirty years. So, if we abstain from meat and wine forever, we shall be healthy and strong too.

20. What is the basic requisite after having learnt the Tao?

Firm belief is a requisite for making progress in the Tao. For example, when we ask for good fortune, it may not be accurate because we do not believe in it. Therefore, we should have faith and confidence in the Tao.

Moreover, there are many similarities between the universe and man. Firstly, there are the sun and the moon in the universe while man has two eyes. Secondly, there are five elements, viz, the Element of Metal, the Element of Wood, the Element of Water, the Element of Fire and the Element of Earth. As far as man is concerned, there are five streams of life-force directed to vivify the five main organs—the heart, the lungs, the kidneys, the liver and the spleen. thirdly, our breath corresponds to the Yang and the Yin forces of the universe. Fourthly, the four cardinal virtues of man, namely, benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom correspond to the four attributes of 'Cian'- 'Yuan', 'Hen', 'Hang', 'Li' and 'Zen'. No doubt, man is similar to the universe

in many ways. therefore, if we preserve our Eternal Spirits well, we shall become sages.

21. Which is the simplest way to improve in the Tao?

The principle of Confucianism is to preserve our Eternal Spirits well. Indeed, this is the simplest way to improve in the Tao. Mencius said that we must benefit other people by propagating the Tao because others will be saved from disasters if they learn the Tao. Mencius also declared that we must be humble and polite to others. If we do so, others will also respect and love us. Moreover, as we have learned the Tao, we must never forget the Tao, but stick to the Great Tao under any circumstances.

22. When we learn the Tao, we know that there is an "easy" way to practise it. But, there is also the "more difficult" way. Can you explain these two methods of practising the Tao?

The "easy" way is that our minds are easily allured by other things. For example, when we see a beautiful diamond, we are tempted by it. Similarly, when we hear some sweet music, we would like to listen to it. We shall not be able to preserve our Spirits if we adopt the "easy" way. However, the "more difficult" way is that we should resist temptation and get rid of our wrong desires, passion and depravity. Mencius said, "The method of practising the Tao is very simple. We should get rid of our wrong desires in order to preserve our Eternal Spirit well." Indeed, we ought to practise this method in order to good progress in the Tao.

23. Is it true that we can help our deceased parents to go to Heaven?

Yes, it is. At first, God laid down the rule that only man could learn the Tao whereas the deceased people could not. How-

ever, since the sages asked God for permission, both man and his deceased ancestors were eventually allowed to learn the Great Tao.

Needless to say, when our parents are alive, we must render our filial respect to them. If our parents are dead, we should try our best to help them to get out of hell. In order to help our parents enjoy happiness in Heaven, we must learn the Tao and propagate it to the best of our abilities. At any rate, if all members of our families learn the Tao, we shall be able to help our deceased parents to go to Heaven.

24. How do we know that our deceased parents reach Heaven?

As soon as our parents go to Heaven, they will enjoy eternal happiness there. They however will come back after one hundred days telling us how they get out of hell and reach Heaven. If our deceased parents have something to instruct us, they will be able to do so at that moment. This shows that our deceased parents have already gone to Heaven.

25. Where do our deceased parents stay when they reach Heaven?

When our deceased parents reach Heaven, they will confine themselves to a room where they will be able to purify themselves. After one hundred days, God will adjust their positions according to their merits. However, their positions depend on their good behaviour during their lifetime. Plainly, if we try our best to propagate the Tao, our deceased parents will also be able to get high positions in Heaven.

Though everyone can become a sage, yet it depends on his work he has achieved during his lifetime. No doubt, if he practises the Tao with his sincere heart, he will be able to become a sage.

26. Is it necessary to be a vegetarian after we have learnt the Tao?

Yes, it is necessary for us to be a vegetarian after learning the Great Tao. The fact is that our Eternal Spirits are originally good. The "onion family" namely garlic, shallots, leeks and chives, poultry and sea-food will certainly damage our Eternal Spirits if we consume them. Furthermore, the "onion family" will affect the five streams of life-force which are directed to vivify the five main organs of our bodies, namely, the liver, the heart, the spleen, the kidneys and the lungs. As a result, we should abstain from meat as our objective of learning the Tao is to preserve our Spirits as well as the five streams of life-force in our bodies. In addition, as God loves all creatures, we should also love all animals and should not eat them. So, we must abstain from meat. If we wish to be a vegetarian, we should start eating vegetables two or three days in a month and eating as little meat as possible. Finally, we shall be able to become a vegetarian.

27. What are the advantages of learning the Great Tao?

If we learn the Tao with devotion and single-mindedness, we shall be able to get rid of our sins and save ourselves from disasters during our lifetime. Furthermore, we shall be able to go to Heaven after death in order to enjoy eternal happiness. Therefore, we should not forget the Tao but must improve in order to achieve success.

28. Is there any evidence to prove that the Tao is genuine?

Yes, there is. In fact, there are many proofs to show that we shall be able to save ourselves from danger and misfortune if we learn the Tao. Moreover, our Spirits will go to Heaven in order to enjoy eternal happiness after death. It is interesting to note that the deceased people having learnt the Tao will come back to tell us that their Spirits are in Heaven. Furthermore, if we are dead,

our faces will look as if we are alive. In winter, our corpses will not become cold and stiff. And in summer, there will be no bad smell. The fact is that our Eternal Spirits will be safe and will go to Heaven after death. Therefore, the Great Tao is genuine.

29. Is that right if we do not progress after having learnt the Tao?

We should progress after learning the Tao. We ought to realize that the main purposes of learning the Tao are to prevent ourselves from misfortune and to go to Heaven after death. Therefore, if we want to prevent ourselves from disasters, we must first understand why there are disasters all over the world. It is because man commits sins. He kills, steals, robs, commits adultery and cheats other people. Consequently, there are much violence and disasters nowadays. As a result, since we have learnt the Great Tao, we should repent our sins, get rid of our bad habits and guard ourselves against depravity. We should stick to the Tao even if we are in an adverse position. Furthermore, we ought to advance in virtue through loyalty and sincerity. Finally, we must propagate the Tao and put the principles of the Tao into practice. On the contrary, if we do not behave ourselves, we shall still have sins and there will be even more disasters in the world. Needless to say, we shall not be able to save ourselves from danger or go to Heaven after death if we do not repent our sins. We should therefore repent and improve ourselves after having learnt the Tao.

30. How can we advise other people if they do not get rid of their bad habits after having learnt the Tao?

We must get rid of our own bad habits before we advise others to get rid of their bad habits. When we give good advice to others, we should explain the bad influence of these bad habits to them or we may give them our advice directly or indirectly. At any rate, our aim is to make them correct their bad habits as soon as possible.

31. Do these three religions, namely, Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism bear the same principles?

All these religions have the same objective to teach people to be good and purify their Eternal Spirits. Indeed, they all propagate the principles of the Great Tao. Obviously, the principles of Taoism are to preserve our Spirits well in order to go to Heaven after death. Moreover, the doctrines of Buddhism direct us to get rid of our wrong desires and ambition, whereas the principles of Confucianism are to get rid of our pride and selfishness. In conclusion, our thoughts and our behaviour should be in accordance with the Tao. Though the methods of the teachings of these three religions are various, yet their main principles are one and same.. In fact, all these religions remind us of purifying our Eternal Spirits in order to be sages.

32. There are different doctrines of the three religions, which is more important?

Since the main principles of these three religions, namely, Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism are one and the same, we should not pay attention to the doctrines of one religion only but disregard the doctrines of the other two religions. As a matter of fact, the doctrines of all these religions are equally important.

First, we talk about Buddhism. Buddha was the creator of Buddhism. He was the son of an emperor in India. At the age of nineteen, he learned from a sage called Yin Tang. Although he preached the Tao for only forty-nine years, yet his teachings benefitted the world for many thousands of years. He taught us to get rid of our wrong desires and greediness in order to purify our Spirits.

Next, we discuss the doctrines of Lao Tze. Lao Tze was a historian in Chou Dynasty. Confucius learned rites from him.

Before he was born, his mother was pregnant for eighty-one years. He went to the Western part of China and preached the Tao to Emperor Wan Hi. Furthermore, Lao Tze had his great book known as "Tao Teh Ching". This book revealed the excellence of the Great Tao. Lao Tze was the creator of Taoism.

Moreover, Lao Tze taught us to practise "Chu Kan Tien Li" which means that the central Yang line of Kan trigram ☰ which corresponds to the lower abdominal region of the body is extracted and brought up to fill the central Yin position of Li trigram ☷ which corresponds to the head. Thus, the two symbols, Kan trigram ☰ and Li trigram will be converted into Kun trigram ☷ and Chien ☱ trigram respectively. Finally, we shall be able to restore the primitive purity of the Yin and Yang aspects of the Absolute.

As far as Confucianism is concerned, Confucius taught us to obey our parents, love our brothers and sisters and to be honest. Confucius' teachings could be easily understood when we study the "Four Books". It is plain that the principles of the three religions are the same, for all these religions teach us to preserve our Eternal Spirits. Although Confucius emphasized the importance of filial piety and that of the five cardinal principles of man, namely, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sincerity, yet the principles of Confucianism are by no means different from those of Taoism and Buddhism. Obviously, if we preserve our Spirits well, we shall be able to render our filial respect to our parents and comply with the five constituents of man.

Therefore, the basic principles of these three religions are the same. Unfortunately, the Buddhists, the Taoists and the Confucianists do not understand the basic doctrines of these three religions. They only have a superficial knowledge of the doctrines.

But, they do not know how to preserve their Eternal Spirits well. It is not surprising therefore that very few people understand the basic principles of these religions nowadays.

Since we have learnt the Tao, we must practise the doctrines of the three religions, for they are equally vital. On the one hand, we should comply with the five cardinal principles of our moral nature. And, on the other hand, we must obey the five commandments of Buddhism. First, we should not kill animals. Secondly, we should not drink wine. Thirdly, we should not indulge in sex. Fourthly, we should not tell lies and finally, we should not steal.

Apart from this, we should also practise the teachings of Lao Tze by enduring hardship and getting rid of our wrong desires and passion.

In conclusion, if we put the principles of the three religions into practice, we shall be able to acquire longevity and become sages as well.

33. Differentiate between a man who has learned the Great Tao and a kind-hearted person without learning the Tao.

The good people are of the opinion that only the Great Tao can save mankind. Therefore, as soon as they learn the Tao, they try to benefit the world by propagating the Tao. They are also convinced that if everyone learns the Tao, there will be less violence, fewer crimes and fewer disasters in the world. Needless to say, a man who has learned the Great Tao is different from a kind-hearted man without learning the Tao. As the latter does not learn the Tao, he still has to go to hell when he dies. Furthermore, he is unable to prevent himself from danger and misfortune during his lifetime. But, the former is much better, for he can save himself

from disasters and will never go to hell if he dies. His Eternal Spirit will go to Heaven in order to enjoy eternal happiness.

Confucius said, "If I have the chance to learn the Tao in the morning, I shall be very glad even if I die in the evening." Therefore, we shall be able to go to Heaven after death if we learn the Tao. Furthermore, we must practise the Tao with tenacity, follow the examples of the past sages and render our filial respect to our parents.

As the Great Tao is valuable, it is necessary for us to learn the Great Tao as soon as possible.

34. Why is it that we heard nothing about the Tao in the past and we only hear it nowadays?

The reason is that in the past days the Great Tao was not widely propagated and so few people could learn it. Since there are all kinds of disasters like flood, typhoon, earthquakes and wars nowadays, the Tao is therefore propagated in order to save mankind. It is plain that the advent of these disasters is due to the fact that man does evil act. He tries to achieve his selfish end by hook or by crook and does not pay attention to the doctrines of the three religions. Consequently, there are all kinds of disasters now.

But, not all human beings are wicked, for there are still many good people in society. The sages therefore asked God for permission to let the good people learn the Tao. So the good people have the golden opportunity to learn the Tao in order to be saved from disasters and misfortune.

It is not surprising therefore that the sages are now going everywhere to propagate the Tao and stress the importance of

benevolence and righteousness which have been neglected by man. Evidently, if everyone learns and practises the Tao, there will be fewer crimes and disasters and we shall be able to enjoy perfect peace and happiness. The Tao is therefore widely propagated nowadays in order to rescue mankind.

35. Why are those people who learned the Tao mostly the masses and not the kings or the emperors?

During the reigns of Emperor Yao and Emperor Shun, only the emperors could learn the Tao. After that, only the educated people believed in the Tao. As arranged by God, the Tao is now propagated to the masses because the Tao bears no bad motives at all, nor does it have any connection with politics. Therefore, those people who believe in the Tao nowadays are mostly the masses.

36. What is meant by the “Divine or Heavenly Ship?” Is it visible?

The term “Divine or Heavenly Ship” is a metaphor? It is referred to the Great Tao and it is invisible. We call the Tao the “Divine or Heavenly Ship” because man only cares for enjoyment and luxuries when he lives. He tries his best to pursue honour and prestige. He also dreams that he will be happy if he has all kinds of enjoyment. But, all this merely brings him sorrow and misery! When he dies, he will go to hell. This is indeed miserable!

Since we have learned the Great Tao, we should realize that the world is in fact a “miserable-sea”. We should also realize that wealth and honour are by no means everlasting and that our wives and our sons will have to depart sooner or later. We are therefore determined to practise and propagate the Tao throughout our lives. Thus, we are on board the “Divine or Heavenly Ship.”

37. There are many religions nowadays. Are all of them true Tao?

Although there are many religions nowadays, yet there is only one genuine Tao—the Great Tao. Needless to say, these religions bear the same objective to teach people to be good. But, we shall be able to go to Heaven after death only if we learn the Tao. So, the Great Tao is very vital to us. If we learn the Tao and propagate it incessantly, we shall be able to become sages.

Confucius said, "There are five steps of practising the Tao: extensive study, thorough inquiry, careful reflection, clear discrimination and earnest practice." Therefore, we must discriminate the Great Tao from other religions.

38. Are we superstitious if we worship the sages?

We respect God because we are much obliged to Him as He is benevolent enough to let us learn the Tao. We are able to save ourselves from danger and go to Heaven after death. Furthermore, we respect the sages such as Confucius, Jesus Christ Gautana Buddha and Lao Tze because they set very good examples for us. As a matter of fact, we shall be able to establish good conduct if we follow their examples. It is plain that Confucius also worshipped God even though he was a very learned man. Moreover, we worship the sages because of their good behaviour. Indeed, they sacrifice themselves in order to save mankind. Therefore, we worship God and the sages in order to show our gratitude. We are not superstitious.

39. Can we ask for money and honour while we worship the sages?

When we worship the sages, we should not ask for money or worldly honour because the most important task we have to do is to propagate the Great Tao. As a result, money and worldly

honour become less important. Moreover, in the past, many kings and emperors enjoyed high prestige and great wealth, but nobody remembers and respects them now! So, wealth and honour are not vital. Furthermore, if we commit sins, we shall not be able to ask for anything from God. In fact, we must first repent all our sins before good fortune will be slow on us.

40. Why do we use our left hands to burn incense when we worship the sages?

We use our left hands to burn incense because we never pick up knives or hurt people with our left hands. This simply implies the meaning of kindness and benevolence. Furthermore, we put incense in the centre first, for "Centre" means fairness. As far as the Tao is concerned, there is no inclination or deflection. In addition, the word "Centre" is also referred to our Eternal Spirits. For example, if we stand at the eastern gate of a castle, the castle will be in the west. But, if we stand at the western gate, then the castle will be in the east. Finally, if we stand in the centre, then everything in the world will be dominated by our Eternal Spirits.

Indeed, all human beings are very great because we all have our valuable Spirits. So, we should never look down on ourselves. We ought to preserve our Spirits well.

41. Some people say that they will become sages if they know the meaning of "One", "Two", and "Three". What does this mean?

Lao Tze said, "The Tao becomes 'One'. 'One' generates 'Two'. 'Two' generates 'Three' and 'Three' generates everything.

The Great Tao is originally quiet. It can be represented by an unbroken circle "O" when it is in the state of rest. But, when the Tao turns from quietness to activity, it can be represented by

the Chinese character “One” (—) (The Chinese character “One” is a straight line.) The Tao then created Sky and Earth. Therefore, we say that “One” generates “Two”. Apart from Spirit and Earth, the Tao also created Man to regulate all affairs in this world. As a result, the “Two” (Sky and Earth) becomes “Three” (Sky, Earth and Man).

After the creation of Sky and Earth and Man, the Tao also created everything in this universe. Therefore, the word “Three” (Sky, Earth and Man) becomes everything. This is the evolutionary process of differentiation from unity to multiplicity.

However, all things are once more one when the objective universe has turned to its one primal and eternal cause. This is called the “involutionary process of integration from multiplicity to its origin of unity”.

So, the meaning of word “One” is mysterious. If we understand its meaning, we shall be sages.

Undoubtedly, the word “One” is the most valuable thing that the sages taught one another in ancient times. If we want to understand the meaning of the Chinese character “One”, we must learn the Tao with our sincere heart. Indeed, the word “One” is referred to the Great Tao.

Mencius also said that we all have our Spirits and should purify our Spirits in order to become sages.

Furthermore, the word “One” corresponds to our Eternal Spirits. The word “Two” is referred to the air that we are breathing in whereas the word “Three” represents our bodies. Indeed, we shall be sages if we preserve our Eternal Spirits well.

It is not surprising therefore that if we understand the meaning of the words "One", "Two" and "Three", we shall be able to become sages.

42. Can you explain everything to me first before I learn the Tao?

No, we cannot. Because there are bad people in the community, we must first of all make sure that the people who wish to learn the Tao must be honest and kind. Furthermore, the sages in the past were very cautious in propagating the Tao. Therefore we must not reveal the secrets easily.

Moreover, the Great Tao is supposed to save the good people only. If we tell everything beforehand, we shall not be able to discriminate the good people from the wicked ones. Therefore, we must be careful while we are preaching the Tao.

43. What is affinity?

"Affinity" means that if a man learns the Tao, he will believe firmly in the Tao and practise it during his life. Indeed, this person has an affinity for the Tao. After having learnt the Great Tao, he should carry out the principles of the Tao with devotion and propagate it in spite of hardship and difficulties. Finally, he achieves success. When he goes to Heaven in order to enjoy eternal happiness after death, God will determine his position according to his merits. This is called "Affinity". Unfortunately, we usually have the wrong impression that if we do not learn the Tao today, we shall still be able to learn it tomorrow. But, time is precious. We must not procrastinate but learn the Tao immediately.

44. Who are the "superior men"?

It is interesting to note that when God first created man, the latter was uncivilized. He lived like wild beasts and ate uncooked food.

God therefore sent down many superior men to benefit mankind. Sui Jen Shi invented methods for making fire which were utilized for the preparation of food. Moreover, Emperor Shen Nung made medicine whereas Emperor Xuan Yuan made clothing. Chang Jie also invented the six scripts while You Chao Shi built houses. Added to this Hou Ji, the Superintendent of Agriculture, taught people how to cultivate land whereas Lin Lun Shi invented music. Consequently, people become civilized.

These men are some of the examples of Superior men.

45. What is meant by “Western Heaven” and “Eastern Earth”?

The word “West” corresponds to white colour. It is obvious that our Eternal Spirits are originally pure and white. But, they are obscured by our wrong desires and passions as we indulge in sex and wine. In order to purify our Spirits, we must therefore get rid of our wrong desires and depravity as soon as possible.

However, the word “East” means the ploughing of land. If we sow good seeds on earth, we shall have good harvest in Heaven. No doubt, if we learn the Tao and propagate it energetically, we shall go to Heaven in order to enjoy eternal happiness. So, since our Spirits came from Heaven, we should go back Heaven by practising the Tao throughout our lives.

46. Why do people usually have no faith in the Tao even though the Tao is genuine?

People usually do not believe in the Tao, for they did not do enough good deeds in the past. Furthermore, their ancestors might not be kind-hearted and so they could hardly learn the Tao.

However, there are some good people who are able to learn the Tao and believe firmly in it because they have kind-hearted parents and generous grand-parents. Let us take an example.

There was a gold mine in the mountain and the government permitted people to dig it. Many people did not believe that there was gold in the rocks. But, a group of wise men who obtained the permission from the government started digging the gold mine. These wise men eventually discovered gold. Later, the foolish people hurried to dig gold as soon as they heard the news. However, all gold had been dug by the wise men before the foolish people were present. So, the foolish men were disappointed.

As we are wise men, we should therefore stick to the Great Tao for good.

47. Many people are very pious at the beginning. But, as time goes on, they become lazy and disappointed. Why?

The sages said, "It is easy for us to learn the Tao, but it is difficult for us to practise the Tao for good." Indeed, very few people can administer affairs to a successful conclusion.

We should therefore set good examples for others in order to help them learn the Tao. Other people will not be able to learn the Tao if we do not propagate it. Moreover, we should encourage others to stick to the Great Tao forever. As a matter of fact, we actually help ourselves when we are helping others to learn the Tao.

Apart from this, we must obey our parents as the fulfilment of filial piety is the chief of all virtues. We must also love our brothers and sisters and keep our promises. Furthermore, we ought to worship God and the sages. We ought not to lose our temper or commit adultery. Indeed, we must behave ourselves and get rid of our depravity. In order to become sages, we should also correct our own mistakes all the time. When we have time to spare, we ought to read good books such as the "Four Books".

and the "Tao Teh Ching". Besides, we should try our best to be vegetarians. As far as expenses are concerned, we must not be extravagant. We should be contented with what we have even though we are poor. Finally, we should have firm belief and confidence in the Tao and propagate the Tao to the best of our abilities.

48. Shall we be tested after we learn the Tao?

Yes, we shall. Man has committed mortal sins ever since God created him. As a result, he will go to hell if he dies. Anyhow, he may have done something wrong to the demons before and so the latter are coming out of hell now to demand the repayment of the "debts" he owes. The fact is that if he learns the Tao, he will go to Heaven after death. And, if he really goes to Heaven, the demons will not be able to make him pay his "debts".

After learning the Tao, we may therefore suffer from illness or may be criticized by other relatives and friends. We may even encounter all kinds of difficulties. Our patience will be tested too. Indeed, the demons are trying to get back the "debts" we "owe".

Despite all criticisms, illness, pain and suffering, we must persevere! We should not swerve from the Great Tao at any time.

Needless to say, pain and sufferings are good for us because God is actually leading us the way to perfection when our patience is tested. Moreover, because of the criticism and blasphemy of other people, we are determined to work harder.

Confucius said, "If we are impatient, we shall lose the most excellent thing—the Great Tao." So, we must persevere in order to achieve success.

49. What is meant by the “Punishment of thunders”?

There are five kinds of thunders, namely, the Thunder of Spirit, the Thunder of Earth, the Thunder of law, the Thunder of Yang and the Thunder of Yin.

Firstly, if there is the Thunder of Spirit, all fog and clouds will disappear and we shall be able to see the blue sky. Next, because of the presence of the Thunder of Earth, everything grows in the world. Furthermore, when the Thunder of Yang emerges, the wicked people will be killed. Moreover, the demons will run away if there is the Thunder of Yin. Finally, the Great Tao will be widely propagated if the Thunder of Law emerges.

Literally, the word “thunder” is referred to the sound by lightning. But, it actually means that all people will be good and will become sages if they learn the Great Tao. No doubt, there are also five thunders in our bodies. When we get angry, the Thunder of Spirit starts moving. Furthermore, if we do evil, the Thunder of Earth will emerge. And, if we have misconduct, the Thunder of Yang will emerge. If we have the intention of harming other people, then the Thunder of Yin will start to move. Finally, if we have greediness and wrong desires, the Thunder of Law will emerge.

When the five thunders emerge in our minds, there is wisdom on the one hand and there is greediness on the other. We must therefore get rid of our wrong desires in order to acquire wisdom.

As a result, we must respect the five thunders. We should first of all repent, behave well and propagate the Great Tao in order to respect the Thunder of Spirit. We should get rid of our ambition and greed in order to respect the Thunder of Earth. Moreover, to respect the Thunder of Yang, we must be patient

and restrain ourselves. Moreover, our speech and our conduct must be righteous in order to respect the Thunder of Yin. Finally, in order to respect the Thunder of Law, we must preserve our Eternal Spirits, which are our true selves.

It is interesting to note that Confucius wrote the "Changes of Thunder" whereas the Duke of Chou also wrote about wind and thunder. This proves that the five thunders are vital to us.

Some people believe that if a man does wicked deeds, he will be killed by thunderstorm. They are convinced that he is being punished by God. However, if people act contrary to the Tao, they will also be punished by the five thunders within themselves, for illness, suffering and pain are also punishment.

50. What is the Law of causation?

The law of causation means that the causes and results of an affair often affect each other. People do evil affairs simply because they do not believe in the law of causation.

It is obvious that if we accumulate evil, we shall receive punishment from God. But, if we help the poor and the handicapped, we shall be able to save ourselves from trouble and misfortune.

It is not surprising therefore that Mr. Shao Kang Jie, a famous scholar in the Sung Dynasty, made the following speech:—

"Very often people come to ask me how to get good fortunes. Well, if they do harm to others, disasters will definitely fall on them. However, if others cheat them and they forgive others, they will be able to save themselves from misfortune."

A sage also said, "If we do evil, we shall get punishment from God. But, if our course of action is righteous, we shall get reward."

Apart from this, Buddha said, "Some people are rich and enjoy long lives simply because they did good deeds during their past lives. Other people suffer from poverty and illness, for they had their evil deeds in the past. As a matter of fact, their present lives are the mirror of their previous deeds."

This shows that we shall have sorrow if we are wicked. However, if we preach the Tao in order to benefit mankind, we shall enjoy eternal happiness in Heaven.

Furthermore, Confucius said, "The family that accumulates goodness is sure to have superabundant happiness, and the family that accumulates evil is sure to have superabundant misery."

In addition, the Sage Lu Tung-pin also said, "Whether we have happiness or not depends on us. If we do good deeds, we shall have abundant happiness."

Undoubtedly, this is the law of causation.

51. What are the five cardinal principles of virtues, the Five Commandments and the Five Elements? Are they the same?

The five cardinal principles of our moral and intellectual nature are benevolence, right-eousness, propriety, wisdom and sincerity.

Buddha however taught us to obey the following Five Commandments:—

(A) Do not kill

- (B) Do not steal
- (C) Do not commit adultery
- (D) Do not tell lies
- (E) Abstain from drinking liquor

Lao Tze also taught us to preserve our Five Elements of Wood, Metal, Water, Fire, and Earth.

Although the ways of teachings of the three religions are different, yet their ultimate goal is the same.

First of all, we should abstain from meat and wine in order to have wisdom and preserve the Element of Water. Moreover, we should not indulge in sex in order to preserve the principle of propriety and the Element of Fire. Furthermore, we should not kill so as to preserve the principle of benevolence and the Element of Wood. In addition, we should not cheat others in order to preserve the principle of sincerity and the Element of Earth. Finally, we must not steal in order to preserve the principle of righteousness and the Element of Metal.

In conclusion, if we regulate our affairs by the Five cardinal principles of our moral nature and obey the Five Commandments, we shall be able to preserve our Eternal Spirits well.

52. Why do we get married as we know that indulging in sex is harmful to us?

The Taoists and the Buddhists do not get married because they are afraid that their wives and children will give them trouble if they get married.

But, we must understand that since God created man, it is right for us to get married in order to bring up the younger generation.

Moreover, the principles of the Tao are not in opposition to the five constituents of man. We should get married and have children. Obviously, if every man is contented to be a bachelor, the earth will be uninhabited in fifty years' time.

However, if we are afraid of having too many children, we shall practise contraception. What is more, we must teach our children to be good and honest and behave well. We should also instil into their minds the principle of filial piety.

In conclusion, we should get married even if we practise the Tao.

53. We know that sex, wine, money, anger and smoking cigarettes are bad. But, why is it difficult for us to get rid of these bad habits?

It is obvious that if we indulge in sex, it will harm our health. If we drink wine, we shall be unable to behave ourselves because wine ruins our Eternal Spirits. Furthermore, indulging in gambling will damage our morality. And, if we lose temper easily, we shall do harm to our livers. Finally, smoking cigarettes is bad for our health and ruins our Spiritual Essence.

In fact, as we have learned the Great Tao, we must make up our minds to get rid of these bad habits.

54. How can we practise the Tao?

It is plain that our Eternal Spirits are originally pure but are often obscured by our wrong desires, greed and passions after we were born.

In order to purify our Eternal Spirits, we should get rid of our wrong desires and selfishness. Moreover, we should regulate our affairs by the five constituents of man, namely, benevolence,

righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sincerity. This is indeed the best way of practising the Tao.

55. In what way can we preserve our valuable Spirits?

After we were born, we are bound to have much thought.

As a matter of fact, there are two ways of preserving our Spirits, namely, the “easy” way and the “more difficult” way.

The foolish people like to follow the “easy” way. They are greedy when they see pretty girls. They become greedy too when they catch sight of money. They always think of the ways of enjoying themselves. Consequently, they will become demons if they die.

But, the wise men follow the “more difficult” way. Indeed, this method leads us to the path of self-perfection. To practise the Tao, we should always think of our faults and try to remedy them as soon as possible. Moreover, we should judge whether our speech and our behaviour are righteous or not. And, we must get rid of our wrong desires. If we practise the Tao whole-heartedly, we shall become sages.

56. In what way are the sages benevolent to mankind?

The sages swore oath to benefit mankind because many people indulge in sex and wine and lead luxurious lives. They do not realize that this kind of “happiness” is only temporary. They also strive for money and worldly honours which are by no means everlasting. Their Spirits are obscured by their wrong desires, greed and passions. In order to satisfy their selfish aims, they do not act in accordance with the five constituents of man. namely benevolences propriety, righteousness, wisdom and sincerity. Therefore, when they die, they will go to hell.

So, the sages devote themselves to propagating the Tao in order to relieve these people of their sufferings. If the latter learn the Tao, they will preserve their Spirits and eventually go to Heaven after death.

57. Does man correspond to the universe?

Man is superior to all creatures in this world. Indeed, Spirit, Earth and Man constitute a sort of Trinity called the "Three Powers", Man being the intermediate creature between Spirit and Earth. Man is great since he has the Eternal Spirit given to him by God.

Obviously, man corresponds to the universe. First, there are the sun and the moon in the universe whereas man has two eyes. Secondly, there are five elements, namely, the Element of Metal, the Element of Wood, the Element of Water, the Element of Fire and the Element of Earth. As far as man is concerned, there are five streams of life-force which are directed to vivify the five main organs of the body—the heart, the lungs, the kidneys, the liver and the spleen. Thirdly, our Spirits correspond to Heaven. Our Spirits came from Heaven when we were born and will go back to Heaven after death.

Fourthly, the air we breathe is the atmosphere. When we die, our breath will blend with the atmosphere again.

Fifthly, our bodies correspond to the earth. No doubt, these bodies are composed of four important elements, namely, water, earth, fire and wind. After we die, the Element of Earth in our bodies will blend with the earth again. Therefore, man corresponds to the universe in various ways. It is plain that if people act simply for their selfish aims, there will be a loss of the condition of equilibrium and harmony in the world. Everything will be

disorderly. Instead of having a hot summer and a cold winter, there will be a "cold" summer and a "hot" winter. If people become wicked, there will be more wars and disasters all the world over.

Similarly, if the Eternal Spirit of a man is obscured by his passions and wrong desires, he will indulge himself in sex and wine and will lose his condition of equilibrium and harmony. Consequently, disasters will fall on him and when he dies, he will suffer in hell.

58. Can you explain the meaning of Heaven, the sky and the earth?

Heaven is invisible, inaudible and unattainable. When it is at rest, it is serene and quiet. But, when it is in motion, it creates and dominates all visible objects though it is invisible. It creates the earth and other planets. It also creates man and other creatures. Indeed, man cannot live and plants cannot grow owing to its absence.

Nobody creates Heaven, but it is everlasting. There is no beginning or end. Indeed, it is the cause of all things and remains eternally the same through all changes.

As everything exists, Heaven also exists. But, although everything is destroyed, it exists.

Heaven is shapeless and may be styled the "Form of the Formless". In fact, we can hardly use any words to describe it. Moreover, only the sages live in Heaven.

Next, the sky regulates the climate on earth. It also enables everything to grow properly and enables the earth and other

planets to revolve in proper order. Unlike Heaven, the sky is visible and changeable and is subject to destruction. The sky only lasts for one hundred and twenty-nine thousand and six hundred years. In addition, the good people without learning the Tao will go to the sky after death but cannot reach Heaven.

As far as the earth is concerned, it comprises of mountains, rivers, animals, plants, minerals and other visible objects. The earth is subject to destruction too.

It is true that the sages do not live on earth or in the sky because both the sky and the earth are destructible. Only Heaven is unchangeable and indestructible.

Needless to say, if a man without learning the Tao dies, his Spirit will go to hell. We must therefore learn the Great Tao in order to go to Heaven after death. It is not surprising therefore that Confucius said." If I have the opportunity to learn the Great Tao in the morning, I shall be very glad even if I die in the evening." Indeed, we shall never go to hell if we learn the Tao.

59. How do we know that the earth and the sky are destructible?

We know that the earth and the sky are subject to destruction, for they are changeable. As they are changeable, there will be the beginning and the end. As far as the sky is concerned, there are altogether twelve periods. The sky and the earth were created in the first period and the second period respectively. However, man was created in the third period. The length of time for each period is ten thousand and eight hundred years. Thus, there are altogether one hundred and twenty-nine thousand and six hundred years.

From the first period to the sixth period, everything in this

universe will grow and develop gradually. But, after the seventh period, everything will be subject to gradual destruction. Therefore, the seventh period is the turning-point. Man will be destroyed in the ninth period whereas the earth will be under complete destruction in the tenth period. Finally, the sky will be destroyed in the eleventh period. In the twelfth period, everything in this universe will be completely destroyed.

“Historical records” analyzed that the sky was created in the first period, the earth created in the second period and man created in the third period. Since there are the beginning and the end as far as the sky is concerned, the earth is also subject to destruction.

Let us take an example. There are twelve months in a year. From January to June plants grow and prosper. But, from July to December, they begin to shed their leaves and finally wither away. The farmers collect the seeds in winter. In the next spring, the plants will grow again.

Obviously, these twelve months of the year correspond to the twelve periods of the sky.

It is not surprising therefore that the sky and the earth are destructible.

60. Is there anything else in our bodies apart from our Eternal Spirits?

Yes, there are desires and greediness. It is interesting to note that our birth is due to the unity of our parents and the presence of our Eternal Spirits which are given to us by God. As far as our Spirits are concerned, there are the five constituents of man, namely, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sincerity. Obviously, our Spirits are basically pure and clean. But,

after we were born, we breathe in air through our noses and our mouths. Thus, our Spirits change. Moreover, when we grow up, our Spirits are often obscured by our wrong desires and passions. As a result, our Spirits change for the second time. At any rate, we must preserve our Eternal Spirits well by carrying out the five cardinal principles of our moral nature.

61. Why are there superior man and foolish men since all of them are human beings?

Foolish people like to enjoy themselves. Their Eternal Spirits are often obscured by their wrong desires, passions and depravity.

They often indulge in sex and wine and they even cheat other people in order to get what they want. Eventually, they become sinners and will go to Hell after death.

But, the superior men are entirely different. As they realize the importance of their Eternal Spirits, they practise the Great Tao tenaciously. Moreover, they repent their sins, get rid of their wrong desires and follow the examples of the previous sages. Finally, their Spirits become pure again and they will be sages.

For example, a mirror is very clean at the beginning. But, as time goes on, the mirror is polluted with dust. It will be dirty forever if we do not clean it from time to time. So, we should purify our Spirits. It is not surprising therefore that all the three religions teach us to preserve our Eternal Spirits well.

62. Why is it that man is superior to all other animals?

As far as creatures are concerned, there are five big categories, namely, birds, animals, fish, insects and man.

First of all, birds obtain the Element of Fire from the south and so they can fly. However, fish can swim because they obtain the Element of Water from the north.

Since animals get the Element of Wood from the east, their appearance is mild but their character is tough. Insects however, obtain the Element of Metal from the west and are strong in appearance but are soft inside. Finally, man obtains the Element of Earth from the centre and is superior to all other animals.

Man is superior to all animals, for he has the five cardinal principles of his intellectual nature. Furthermore, unlike other animals, man is civilised.

He also rears cattle and takes care of dogs and cats. In addition, he rears birds and fish.

As man is superior to other creatures, he is able to be a sage.

63. Is man's nature good or bad?

Mencius said, "Man's nature is born good." The reason is that our Eternal Spirits are originally good. People are wicked simply because their Spirits are always obscured by their wrong desires, passions and depravity. If they get rid of their wrong desires and passions, their Spirits will be pure.

Furthermore, there are the five cardinal principles of our moral nature in our Spirits. No doubt, if we are benevolent and polite to others, our behaviour will be in accordance with the Tao. Our Eternal Spirits are therefore good. While Mencius declared that man's nature was born good, He was referring to our Eternal Spirits. Mencius is indeed a sage.

64. What is the difference between the Eternal Spirit and "hun" and "po"?

"Hun" and "Po" exist in our bodies. They come from the atmosphere and are destructible. "hun" and "po" dwell in our liver and in our lungs respectively. But, our Eternal Spirits are everlasting as they come from Heaven. They can neither be drowned nor be burnt. Usually, if people die, their Spirits will go to hell and will be reborn in this world. Though their bodies change, yet their Spirits do not change. Indeed, their Spirits are their true selves. Furthermore, the Eternal Spirit of a man and that of a sage are the same. Although our Spirits are invisible, they regulate all our thought, our behaviour and our speech. Therefore, the most vital thing we have to do is to preserve our Eternal Spirits well.

65. What is the difference between our Eternal Spirits and our wrong desires?

It is evident that greediness is bad for us whereas our Eternal Spirits are mysterious and hidden. Furthermore, our Spirits are originally pure and clean. If we are greedy, our Spirits will be obscure. But, if we get rid of our wrong desires and our bad habits, our Spirits will be pure again. It is not difficult for us to be sages as soon as we are able to purify our Spirits.

After learning the Tao, we must preserve our Spirits. We should on the one hand get rid of our wrong desires and passions. And, on the other hand, we must respect and love other people by preaching the Tao. If we make great efforts to do so, our Eternal Spirits will be pure and clean one of these days.

66. Which book is the best one to read?

The aim of reading books is to find out the methods of pre-

serving our Spirits. As we have already known, the methods of preserving our Spirits, all we have to do is to purify our Spirits well. Therefore, there is no harm even if we do not read any books.

Furthermore, there are about five thousand four hundred and eighteen Buddhists' books. If we read all these books, it will take us fifteen years to finish reading them.

We still have to read some essential books, like the "Four Books" and the "Tao Teh Ching". However, when we read these books, we have to put the principles of the Tao into practice at the same time.

67. What is wisdom?

If we wish to have wisdom, we must put the doctrines of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism into practise after we understand them. We must carry out the five constituents of man too. Furthermore, we should be considerate to others and realize that the Tao is good and that enjoyment only brings us sorrow and misery. We must also preserve our Eternal Spirits and get rid of our passions and depravity. Thus, we shall acquire wisdom.

However, the word "wisdom" is also referred to our Spirits and our bodies. Before we were born, our Spirits can be represented by Chien trigram ☰ while our bodies are represented by Kun trigram ☷. But, after we were born, our Spirits transform from Chien trigram ☰ to Li trigram ☷. Similarly, our bodies transform from Kun trigram ☷ to Kan trigram ☲.

Evidently, Li trigram ☷ is a symbol for fire whereas Kan trigram ☲ symbolizes water. Water corresponds to wisdom as Confucius said, "The wise take delight in water."

After having learned the Tao, we must learn to extract the central Yang line of Kan ☰ and bring up from the lower region to fill the central Yin position of Li ☷, thus converting the two symbols, Kan and Li, into Kun ☷ and Chien ☷ respectively. Consequently, we shall restore to primitive purity the Yin and the Yang aspects of the Absolute. Thus we shall be able to acquire wisdom.

It is obvious that the foolish men want to find out the methods of preserving their Spirits from the books. But, if they do not understand the meaning of Kan and Li, they will never know the methods of preserving their Spirits.

68. When we talk about the Tao, we always hear about the figures "three" and "five". What is their meaning?

As far as Confucianism is concerned, there are three basic principles. First, the masses should obey their rulers. Secondly, the son should obey his parents and thirdly, the wife should obey her husband.

However, the figure "five" is referred to the five constituents of man, namely, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sincerity.

When we talk about Taoism; there are also three main things in our bodies. These main elements are our vital fluid, creative energy and spiritual essence.

Apart from this, there are the five streams of life-force from the five main organs of the body, namely, the heart, the liver, the spleen, the lungs and the kidneys.

As regards Buddhism, there are also three important prin-

ciples. First, we should respect the sages. Secondly, we must learn from the sages and thirdly, we ought to carry out the teachings of the sages.

In addition, there are also the Five Commandments of Buddhism. We should not kill, steal, commit adultery, tell lies or drink liquor.

Although the methods of the teachings of the three religions varies, their aims are the same. If we put these principles into practice, we shall become sages.

Besides, there are three important elements within our bodies as well. Needless to say, our birth is due to the "unity" of our parents. But, there is also the presence of the Eternal Spirit which is given to all of us by God.

What is more, when we read books such as the "Four Books" and Lao Tze's "Tao Teh Ching", we must bear in mind that there are many implications. In fact, we should learn the Tao in order to understand these implications.

As soon as we are able to understand their meaning, we must try our best to preserve our Spirits well.

69. Can you explain the meaning of the words "three" and "five"?

The word "three" means our vital fluid, creative energy and spiritual essence. The word "five" is referred to the five streams of life-force from the five main organs of the body—the heart, the lungs, the kidneys, the spleen and the liver. If we get rid of our wrong desires, these five streams of life-force will become pure.

70. "The Great Learning" taught us five steps of making progress

in the Tao. What are they?

“The Great Learning” taught us the five steps to practise the Tao.

First of all, we must realize that Heaven is our real home and that the main objective of learning the Tao is to go to Heaven in order to enjoy eternal happiness.

Next, if we know our ultimate goal well, then we shall be able to get rid of our wrong desires and passions. We shall also be able to obey the Five Commandments.

Moreover, if we get rid of our wrong desires, we shall be able to stick to the Tao forever. Indeed, we should never forget the Tao under any circumstances. Furthermore, if we stick to the Tao, we shall be able to have peace of mind. As a matter of fact, we should act in accordance with the Gao and have no greediness at all.

Evidently, if we have peace of mind, we shall be able to acquire wisdom and realize that everything in this world is not genuine whereas only our Spirits are everlasting. Besides, we shall be able to judge if our words and our behaviour are right. If our act is righteous, we should stick to it. If not, we should remedy our behaviour immediately. Finally, our Spirits will become pure. At this stage, our act and our speech will be in accordance with the Tao. Consequently, we shall be able to be sages.

In conclusion, we should practise these five steps of preserving our Eternal Spirits.

71. How should we practise the Tao?

We know that we shall be able to go to Heaven if we learn

the Tao. After learning the Tao, we must therefore believe firmly in the Tao. If we stick to the Great Tao, our minds will be quiet and we shall have peace of mind. Subsequently, we shall be able to judge whether our behaviour is correct or not and finally, we shall be able to preserve our Spirits.

As a matter of fact, all this depends on the efforts we make. We shall definitely become sages if we make great efforts.

72. How can we assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Spirit and Earth?

As our Eternal Spirits are originally quiet and pure, we should get rid of our wrong desires and passions in order to preserve them. For example, when we propagate the Tao, we must not boast of what we have achieved. In fact, we simply fulfil our duties. So, we should not have any wrong desires. Furthermore, we should regulate our affairs by the five constituents of man, namely, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sincerity. As a result, all our thought, our words and our behaviour will be dominated by our Spirits. While we are able to purify our Eternal Spirits, we should at the same time teach others to learn the Tao in order that they are also able to preserve their Spirits.

It is not surprising therefore that Mencius said, "If we purify our Eternal Spirits, we shall be able to help others to purify their Spirits. If everyone preserves his Spirit well, we shall then be able to assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Spirit and Earth."

73. How can we be free from wordly ties?

We must be free from wordly ties in order to preserve our Eternal Spirits. First of all, we should realize that money and property are not genuine, for we cannot take any with us when we die. Similarly, we can hardly stay with our wives and our daugh-

ters forever. Therefore, we must learn the Tao and purify our Eternal Spirits. We must get rid of our bad habits and our wrong desires. What is more, we ought to be benevolent to others and love our parents. Furthermore, we must be sincere, humble and polite to others. Since our Eternal Spirits are far more important than our bodies, we should not enjoy ourselves. Indeed, our behaviour and our speech must be in accordance with the Tao.

If we practise the Tao in this manner, we shall be sages.

74. Can you tell us something more about our bodies, our minds, our Eternal Spirits and the methods of practising the Tao?

Our bodies are not genuine, for they are composed of four big elements, namely, the Element of Earth, the Element of Water, the Element of Fire and the Element of Wind. If we die, these four elements will depart and our bodies will gradually decay.

As a matter of fact, we simply make use of our bodies in order to preserve our Eternal Spirits.

As far as our minds are concerned, they are mysterious and quiet. Indeed, we should not have any wrong desires or passions. Our act must be in accordance with the Tao.

Apart from this, our Eternal Spirits are pure and there is no desire at all. We should therefore not boast of ourselves even though we have benefitted the world by propagating the Tao. What is more, our Spirits consist of the five constituents of man. Although our Spirits are invisible, yet they dominate our thought, our act and our speech.

Because our Spirits are often obscured by our wrong desires

and passions, we must get rid of our wrong desires in order to purify our Spirits. Indeed, our Spirits are mysterious.

Finally, we discuss the methods of practising the Tao. Obviously, the books of the three religions teach us to get rid of our wrong desires and passions. But, as soon as we are able to put the principles of the Tao into practice, we do not need any books. Indeed, the methods of practising the Tao are simply a means to an end.

In conclusion, we shall become rich men if we accumulate merits during our lives. But, if we purify our Spirits and devote ourselves to propagating the Great Tao, we shall become sages.

75. People say that our eyes, ears, nose and mouths are “thieves”. What does this mean?

We have four “thieves” with us which are our eyes, our nose, our tongues, and our ears. Our eyes like to see beautiful things whereas our ears like sweet sound. Moreover, our nose likes fragrant odour while our tongues like delicious taste.

If we use our eyes, ears, nose and tongues in the wrong manner, they will become “thieves” and damage our Spirits.

Confucius said, “If this book is an indecent one, we should not read it. If other people’s words are not righteous, we should not listen to them. Moreover, if our speech spoils others’ reputation, we should not speak. And if this is not the proper thing to do, we must not act.”

Apart from this, we should pay attention to the following four points:—

First, we should not be biassed against anyone. In fact, we

should treat everyone same in order to save mankind.

Secondly, we must realize that the earth is by no means everlasting and so we should dedicate our lives to propagating the Great Tao.

Thirdly, since our body is not genuine, we must not enjoy ourselves but make use of our bodies to practise the Great Tao.

Fourthly, we should not lead comfortable lives. Instead, we ought to spread the Tao so that all people will be able to learn the Tao and save themselves from disasters.

In conclusion, we must follow these four important points in order to preserve our Spirits.

76. What is meant by “Close our six doors and don’t let our true selves go away.”?

The six “doors” in our bodies are referred to our eyes, ears, noses, tongues, bodies and thought. If we use them in the wrong manner, we shall become birds or cows for the next life. For example, if our eyes always see beautiful objects, our Spirits will come out of our eyes when we die. After death we shall become birds which people like to watch. Moreover, if we like to listen to wicked people’s words. Our Spirits will come out of our ears when we die. We shall become cows or horses which are able to understand people’s words.

Furthermore, if we often smell delicious food or fragrant odour, our Spirits will come out of our noses when we die. For the next life, we shall become flies which like all kinds of dirty food.

Finally, if we often speak ill of others, our Spirits will come

out to our mouths and will become fish for the next life.

If in not surprising therefore that the wicked people will receive punishment as they do evil during their lives.

However, the good people who help the poor and the handicapped throughout their lives will become wealthy men. But, they still have to go to hell after enjoying worldly honours and great wealth. Unfortunately, they are unable to go to Heaven because they do not learn the Tao.

As the Great Tao is valuable, we must learn the Tao. Moreover, we should get rid of our wrong desires and our bad habits. Finally, we ought not to forget our Eternal Spirits which are our true selves.

77. When we read “I-ching”, we come across the expression “The four attributes of Cian Yuan Hen Li Zhen”. What does this mean?

“Cian” is referred to the Yang principle. It also represents the Great Tao. As far as man is concerned, “Cian” is referred to his Eternal Spirit. All things owe their beginning to “Cian”. Indeed, it unites and dominates all things.

However, “Yuan Hen Li Zhen”—the four attributes of Cian—correspond to spring, summer, autumn and winter respectively. After “Zhen”, “Yuan” arises again because in winter the Yang principle begins to manifest itself anew and paves the way for the return of spring.

It is obvious that “Yuan Hen Li Zhen” also correspond to the four cardinal points of the compass. “Yuan” is the east while “Hen” is the south. “Li” is the west whereas “Zhen” is the north.

Furthermore, the four attributes of Cian also correspond to benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom. In fact, we should practise the five cardinal principles of our moral nature in order to become superior men.

Apart from this, we often say that our act and our speech are directed by our hearts. But, actually it is our valuable Spirits which dominate our words and our behaviour.

Obviously, we shall be rich men in the next life if we help the handicapped. But, if we learn the Tao and carry out the principles of the Tao, we shall be able to enjoy eternal happiness in Heaven after death.

78. In the "I-ching" there is an expression which goes "I" means that we do not need to consider whether our behaviour is correct or not. What does it mean?

The Chinese character 'I' means change and transformation. But, if it is referred to the Tao, it means unchangeable. Without the Tao the universe cannot exist. The earth and other planets cannot exist either. The Tao is indeed the cause of all things.

It is obvious that our Eternal Spirits are originally pure and there is no greediness at all. They also consist of the five constituents of man. Moreover, they dominate our thought, our speech and our behaviour.

In order to purify our Spirits, we must get rid of our wrong desires, passion and depravity. Furthermore, we should always judge whether our behaviour is correct or not. We should also abstain from meat and wine and get rid of our bad habits. Consequently, as we are able to purify our Spirits, we do not need to consider whether our act is righteous or not.

79. Mr. Zhou Zi Yun said, "When the true substance of the Infinite and the essence of the Two Modes (Yin and Yang) and the Five Elements (Water, Fire, Wood, Metal and Earth) unite in mysterious union, integration ensues." And, in "I-ching" we also find the expression "The Yang principle constitutes the male element whereas the Yin principle constitutes the female element." What does this mean?

We come across the following expression in "I-ching", "One Yin and one Yang constitute what is called the Tao." But, we must notice that "I-ching" mentions the Supreme Ultimate only but mentions nothing about the Infinite. Obviously, there is the Infinite above the Supreme Ultimate. The Supreme Ultimate is referred to the Tao in motion and is represented by the Chinese character "One" which is a straight line. When the Tao is in activity, it creates Spirit, Earth and Man.

However, the Tao is originally quiet. it is represented by an unbroken circle "O" when it is at rest. This is the Infinite.

So, the Infinite corresponds to the Tao at rest while the Supreme Ultimate corresponds to the Tao in activity.

As regards the essence of the Two Modes, it is referred to our parents. When our parents are having their "unity". God bestows us with the Eternal Spirits and eventually we were born. So, there are actually three modes instead of two modes. Owing to the union of the essence of the three modes and five elements, integration ensues.

Furthermore, when a baby is born, he will become a male if there are much Yang forces, on the contrary, if there are much Yin forces, the baby will be a female. So, the Yang principle constitutes the male element whereas Yin principle constitutes the female element.

80. Explain the meaning of the words "means" and "end".

There are things which are more vital and there are also other things which are less important. For example, the trunk of a tree is more important than the flowers and the leaves. Without the trunk the flowers cannot blossom. Similarly, our Eternal Spirits are more important than our bodies.

Our Spirits are originally quiet, but they dominate our thought, our act and our speech. We should regulate our affairs by the five cardinal principles of our moral and intellectual nature which are possessed by our Spirits.

Moreover, our eyes, ears, mouths, hands, and feet are means to an end. For example, we study the books of the three religions by making use of our eyes. Furthermore, we make good use of our ears in order to listen to the explanation of the principles of the Tao. We also preach the Tao by means of our feet in order to help more people understand the Tao. As a matter of fact, our Eternal Spirits dominate the various parts of the bodies in order to carry out our task. So, our Spirits are more important than our bodies.

Unfortunately, people usually have the wrong idea that it is the heart that dominates our words and our behaviour. But, the heart is only an organ of the body. In fact, our Eternal Spirits dominate all our behaviour, our thought and our speech.

81. How to practise the Tao after we learned the Great Tao?

If we want to progress in the Tao, we must behave well as the sages do.

First of all, we must pay filial respect to our parents. Next, we must be kind to our brothers and sisters. Moreover, we should advance in virtue through loyalty and good faith. In addition, we

must tackle our tasks to the best of our abilities. We must be humble to others even if we occupy a high position. We must also get rid of our passion. Finally, we should correct our mistakes when others point out our mistakes.

If we do so, we shall be able to practise the Great Tao.

82. Who are the intelligent men?

The intelligent men realize that there is the Great Tao to learn. They believe that there are Heaven and Hell. They also believe in the law of causation. And, if they repent their sins, they will be able to prevent themselves from disasters.

As a result, they are eager to learn the Tao and practise it all the time. They also devote themselves to propagating the Tao in order to benefit mankind. Moreover, they are determined to get rid of their bad habits and guard themselves against depravity. Furthermore, their words and their behaviour are always in accordance with the Tao. They also preach the Tao and the five constituents of man. While they set good examples for others, they also help other people to learn the Tao. These men are called intelligent men.

83. Who are the foolish men?

Foolish men are those people who do not believe the presence of Heaven and Hell, nor do they believe that the wicked people will suffer in Hell if they die. They simply indulge themselves in sex and wine. They like delicious food and so they kill chickens and ducks that are in fact their relatives and friends. No doubt, they commit sins because man will become birds or cow after death if he has evil act. So, they are killing their relatives when they kill animals.

Unfortunately, these foolish men will eventually become pigs or cows and will be killed by other people if they die.

It is interesting to note that when Tsang Chieh invented six scripts, there are two "men" within the Chinese character "meat". In fact, human beings are eating one another when they eat meat. These people are called foolish men.

84. Who are the astray men?

Silly people think that enjoyment is everything in life and always indulge in sex and wine. They do not bother where their Spirits will go after death, but they simply do everything in order to satisfy their selfish aims. Even though they meet sages, they are not able to understand the excellence of the Great Tao. As a result, they lose their Spirits. If they die, they will go to hell and will not be able to get out of it. These men are called astray men.

85. Who are the superior men?

To be superior men, we must first of all understand that we shall be sages if we learn the Tao with our sincere heart. Moreover, we should not kill animals, steal or commit adultery. Furthermore, we must neither curse others nor tell lies. We must not be greedy or lose our temper easily. What is more, we must not be biased against anyone. Since we learned the Tao, we should not indulge in gambling or wine. As a matter of fact, all we have to do is to try our best to help everyone to learn the Great Tao. In conclusion, we are determined to carry out the principles of the Tao forever in order to be superior men.

86. When we were young, we did much wicked deeds. Though we are old now, we wish to learn the Tao. Shall we be able to become sages then?

Yes, we shall become sages if we learn the Tao with devotion

and single-mindedness. But, we must repent our sins and carry out the principles of the Tao whole-heartedly. Furthermore, we ought to obey the Buddhists' Five Commandments and get rid of our bad habits as soon as possible.

As a Chinese saying goes, "As soon as we put down the knives and determine not to kill anymore, we shall be able to become sages." Therefore, we shall still be able to achieve success provided that we learn the Great Tao.

87. Some people abstain from meat and make great efforts to propagate the Tao after learning the Tao. Unfortunately, they eat meat when they grow old. Will they become sages?

No, they will never become sages if they act against the Tao or eat meat again when they become old. The reason is that keeping their promises is vital. Undoubtedly, they will lose wisdom if they keep themselves away from the Tao. If they have no wisdom, they will not be able to achieve success.

88. If we are illiterates, are we able to improve after learning the Tao?

Yes, we are able to improve in the Tao even if we are illiterates. But, we must be diligent and follow the Tao to an end. Furthermore, we must get rid of our wrong desires, for if our minds are full of illusions and greed, we shall not be able to make any progress.

It is true that a proud man cannot understand the excellence of the Tao, nor can a man with rash character preserve his Spirit well.

We must therefore purify our minds in order to acquire wisdom. Moreover, our behaviour and our speech must be in

accordance with the Tao.

89. Are we afraid of death after learning the Tao?

No, we are not. Everybody has to die. As we learned the Tao, we understand that the earth is destructible and that everything in the world is not genuine at all. So, we should not worry about whether we lead long lives or not. Furthermore, today's death is the mark of future rebirth. Since our Eternal Spirits came from Heaven when we were born, our Spirits will go back to Heaven after death if we learn the Tao.

But, although we are not afraid of death, we should treat this as an important matter. The ultimate goal of learning the Tao is to get out of hell after death. As we realize that the world is miserable and that the birth and death cycle is endless, we must value the Tao.

If we learn the Great Tao, we shall never go to hell but go to Heaven in order to enjoy eternal happiness.

The Tao is indeed valuable and we must not forget it under any circumstances.

90. Can you explain further about our minds and our Eternal Spirits?

First of all, our minds are not "safe", because they can be either good or bad. There are wrong desires and passion in our minds. If we have a prejudice against others, our minds will lead us astray. Our minds may also prevent us from practising the Tao whole-heartedly. When we encounter difficulties we become disappointed. Therefore, our minds can be good or bad as they are not stable.

Apart from this, our Eternal Spirits are mysterious. Although they are invisible, yet they regulate all our affairs. Our Spirits are originally pure, for there is no greed or passion at all. Moreover, our Spirits consist of the five cardinal principles of our moral and intellectual nature. Furthermore, they are usually "hidden". In order to preserve them, we must get rid of our wrong desires.

Undoubtedly, after learning the Tao, we should practise it with devotion and single-mindedness.. If we attain truthfulness we shall be able to understand the excellence of the Tao. Similarly, if we study the books of the three religions, we shall become more truthful. Obviously, truthfulness is essential for the prosecution of our spiritual task.

In order to purify our Eternal Spirits, we must keep away from distractive sights and sounds. Furthermore, we should regulate our affairs by the five cardinal principles of our moral and intellectual nature. In addition, we must have firm belief in the Tao and put the principles of the Tao into practice. Thus, we shall be able to have wisdom.

* * * — END — * * *

CONFUCIUS said, "If I have the chance to learn the Tao in the morning, I shall be very glad even if I die in the evening."

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**CLOSE OUR SIX 'DOORS' and DON'T LET
OUR TRUE SELVES GO AWAY.**

* * *

= *the five constituents of human beings* =

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